

## Evaluation Visit Report

### **Petition from New Jersey Center for Teaching and Learning to Offer the Master of Science in Teaching and Learning Physics, the Master of Science in Teaching and Learning Chemistry, and the Master of Science in Teaching and Learning Mathematics in New Jersey**

**July 27, 2019**

Site Visit: June 25-26, 2019

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*This report represents the views of the consulting team. The content of the report is based on the consulting team's evaluation of the institution with respect to the New Jersey licensure rules (New Jersey Administrative Code, Title 9A – Higher Education). The report has been prepared for the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education to assist in making a decision upon the New Jersey Center for Teaching and Learning (NJCTL) petition to offer the Master of Science in Teaching and Learning Physics, the Master of Science in Teaching and Learning Chemistry, and the Master of Science in Teaching and Learning Mathematics, as well as individual courses from these degree programs, in an online format from a New Jersey location.*

*The consulting team's comments and recommendations are in italics following each requirement, or set of requirements, that was reviewed. Based on the petition review and on-site visit, the consulting team recommends licensure for the maximum initial licensure period of three (3) years.*

**SUBCHAPTER 1. GENERAL STANDARDS (amendments effective 10/17/16)**

**9A:1-1.5 Long-range plan**

An institution seeking a license shall develop a long-range plan to attain its goals. Appropriate resources (physical, human, and financial) should undergird the elements of the plan. The plan shall be made available to the Secretary upon the Secretary's request.

*NJCTL, founded in an ambitious mission and with impressive track-record of preparing STEM educators, has a long-range plan that accounts for the appropriate resources over the next three years.*

*Of particular strength:*

- *STRONG / COST NEUTRAL RECRUITMENT STRATEGY: “NJCTL has more than 25,000 teachers registered as users of its free classroom course materials, just under half of those in NJ. Those teachers can be reached by e-blast to attend webinars to learn about and register for NJCTL programs...NJEA provides free advertising space to NJCTL in its NJEA Review, which reaches about 150,000 NJ educators” (p. 34).*
- *REASONABLE TUITION STRUCTURE: The tuition for NJCTL courses is \$275 per credit and there are no fees. Based on these numbers, the cost of a MSTL in mathematics = \$10,450; and a MSLT in Chem/Physics = \$8,250 <p. 35>. Additional steps have been taken to reduce these overall costs (e.g., 20% discount for members of the NJ teachers’ union; relationships with schools to cover tuition; privately funded scholarships). These proactive measures will increase the likelihood of meeting enrollment projections.*

*Areas of productive push:*

- *MORE GROWTH? Given the well-documented need for STEM teachers in NJ (and the country), the positioning of your institution to serve educators world-wide, and the impressive track record of educators you have already prepared, should you be striving for even greater growth and scale?*
- *CLARIFY YOUR AUDIENCE: As you transition from an endorsement program to one granting master’s degrees, you should carefully examine your assumptions around who you are serving and their motivations. A middle school science teacher interested in teaching high school mathematics is very different from a calculus teacher looking to earn a master’s degree to receive an increase in salary.*

*The institution **meets** the requirements of this rule.*



## **9A:1-1.6 Organization and administration**

(a) The institution shall be organized to provide sufficient administrative, program, and resource support to attain its mission. The roles and responsibilities of administrators, faculty, and staff should be appropriate to its mission and described in writing.

*NJCTL is organized in such a way to provide sufficient support to attain its mission.*

*The eight full-time faculty, one full-time administrative/operations person, one instructional designer/course developer, and 25 part-time faculty and hourly employees seem to be more than enough to meet the needs of the projected enrollment of 125 students <pp. 236-237>.*

(b) From an organizational perspective, effective use of an institution's human, physical, and financial resources requires a critical mass of students in order to demonstrate a need for the institution and to provide the learning environment described in its mission statement.

*There is a clearly articulated need for these programs and a track-record of recruiting students into a program that will only become more attractive if given the ability to award Master's degrees locally, instead of through a partner institution (CSU-Global). Finding a critical mass of students does not appear to be a concern.*

(c) Consistent with the institution's mission, the institution's governing board shall oversee all legal aspects of its operations, set institutional policy, plan for the institution, monitor progress toward fulfilling the mission, and ensure continuous institutional assessment and planning. In addition, the board should develop and maintain policies (by-laws) that specify its own duties, responsibilities, and procedures, as well as its membership, manner of appointment, and terms of office. The board is responsible for selecting the institution's chief executive officer, who leads its administration.

*NJCTL has a governing board with representation from a diverse group of stakeholders <pp. 385-386>. The board has three established meetings a year <p. 32> and has a robust set of by-laws under which to operate <pp. 245-252>.*

(d) Reporting to the governing board, the chief executive officer is responsible for the following:

1. Administering the governing board's policies;
2. Providing general educational leadership and promote educational effectiveness;
3. Maintaining appropriate administrative records;
4. Establishing academic/administrative regulations and procedures dealing with:
  - i. Organizational structure;
  - ii. Personnel appointments, reappointments, tenure, and promotions;
  - iii. Salary schedules;
  - iv. Budgets;
  - v. Planning, development, and management of facilities;
  - vi. Educational programs, academic policies, and research;

- vii. Granting of degrees; and
- viii. Community service;
- 5. Preparing and submitting such reports as the governing board, the Presidents' Council, or the Secretary may request; and
- 6. Providing official publications, such as student and faculty handbooks, a catalog, and other related documents or publications, to interested persons at intervals sufficient to ensure current information.

*Dr. Robert Goodman, NJCTL's Executive Director, reports to the governing board and appears to be a strong and competent leader of this organization. With impressive backgrounds in both STEM industries and secondary teaching, Dr. Goodman is particularly well-positioned to deliver on the manifold responsibilities of this position <pp. 40-41>. Additionally, the institution has also taken appropriate steps toward succession planning if/when Dr. Goodman should leave his position.*

(e) Each institutional constituency directly concerned with the educational process including, but not limited to, the administration, faculty, staff, and students should have a voice in institutional governance with respect to those issues with which it is appropriately concerned. Such participation should be defined in writing.

*As a relatively small and self-described "flat" organization, the variety of institutional constituencies have a voice in institutional governance and are documented in handbooks <pp. 50>. While there is direct evidence of the administration, faculty, and staff having a voice in institutional governance, it is unclear whether students have one.*

(f) Statements of institutional principles, policies, and procedures governing topics such as academic integrity and academic freedom should be developed and disseminated widely among the institutional community. These statements should be reviewed periodically, and proper measures should be established to see that they are enforced.

*There is evidence of institutional principles, policies, and procedures around academic integrity and academic freedom. Both are made available in the published student and faculty handbooks and have been revised as recently as Fall 2018. <pp. 50-51>*

*Of particular strength:*

- *STRONG LEADERSHIP: Dr. Goodman and the senior leadership team are strong educators with a diversity of experiences both in and outside of the education field. While we hope that Dr. Goodman continues in his position for a long time, we applaud NJCTL for thinking about succession planning and would encourage them to continue deepening this work.*

*Areas of productive push:*

- *REGISTRAR: While not specifically called out in this section or the regulations, we would*

*encourage you to examine the role of the registrar and proactively plan for all of the duties and responsibilities that (a) will begin if you offer Master's degrees in the State of New Jersey; along with (b) all the services that CSU Global is currently providing.*

- *STUDENT VOICE: As noted above, we would encourage you to seek out ways to give students a voice in institutional governance.*

*The institution **meets** the requirements of this rule.*

### **9A:1-1.7 Finances**

(a) An institution shall continuously ascertain its financial requirements, determine its sources of revenue, plan for current and future needs, and budget its resources accordingly.

(b) To qualify for and retain a license, an institution shall demonstrate that it:

1. Possesses financial resources sufficient to realize its mission over an extended period of time;
2. Has a long-range financial plan that includes a program for securing gifts, grants, and other appropriate income;
3. Plans its expenditures by budgeting available resources for specific institutional purposes; and
4. Maintains adequate financial records that are audited annually by an independent certified public accountant in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards promulgated by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants for colleges and universities.

(c) Each licensed New Jersey institution shall furnish annually to the Secretary a copy of its audited financial statement and management letter(s) (if issued) on or before December 31 of each year. An out-of-State institution licensed to offer college credit-bearing courses or academic degree programs in the State shall furnish to the Secretary a copy of its audited financial statement and management letter(s) upon request of the Secretary.

(d) Each licensed institution also shall carry insurance or provide for self-insurance to maintain the solvency of the institution in case of loss by fire or other causes, to protect the institution in instances of personal and public liability, and to ensure the continuity of the institution.

*NJCTL's total budget for operations is approximately \$2.8 million, expanding to \$3.2 over the next three years. There is adequate revenue to offset these expenses so that there is a small surplus carried year-over-year. A large portion of revenue comes from a sustainable source: tuition. Plans have tuition becoming an even greater source over time (rising from 35% total income to 53%), therefore, reducing the reliance on donations <pp. 304-310>. NJCTL has robust documentation of an annual auditing process <pp. 256-303> and carries appropriate insurance to ensure the continuity of the institution <pg. 46>.*

*Of particular strength:*

- *AN EFFICIENT, TEAM-BASED APPROACH: The institution appears to be thinking about the multitude of skills in which all employees excel and/or are passionate (e.g., teaching and curriculum design). There is evidence of, and future-facing plans for, more flexibly deploying (or redeploying) faculty and staff to meet the needs of expanding student populations. This helps to keep the operating costs down.*

*Areas of productive push:*

- *DECREASE THE RELIANCE ON DONATIONS: While the projected trend in your income is positive, three years from now you are predicting 53% of your income coming from tuition. While the trend is admirable, pushing for (and goal setting around) an even greater share of tuition-based revenue would be advisable.*
- *EFFICIENCY AND QUALITY: Most of your case for financial sustainability rests on the assumption that you will be able to deliver the same services more efficiently moving forward. This is probably right, but don't underestimate the amount of work that implementing the new efficiencies will take. Also, and you narrated this point during the site visit, find the right balance between efficiency and quality of experience for your students.*

*The institution **meets** the requirements of this rule.*

### **9A:1-1.8 Faculty**

(a) The institution shall document and maintain appropriate records attesting to faculty qualifications, performance, and achievements. It should define clearly and disseminate the criteria and the process for promotion.

*NJCTL captures faculty qualifications and achievements in CVs and resumes. Faculty members are evaluated annually by the executive director and dean of faculty, with input from their colleagues. The evaluation assesses performance on their responsibilities and additional projects, using the Faculty Employee Performance Review Form presented in Appendix O < p. 50>.*

(b) The majority of all full-time faculty, part-time faculty, and adjunct faculty at an institution offering only the associate degree shall have at least a master's degree in the field in which they are appointed, if such a qualification exists (recognizing that some technical/occupational specialties offer no such degree), or an equivalent qualification in the field in which they are appointed.

*The NJCTL does not offer associate's degrees.*

(c) The majority of all full-time faculty, part-time faculty, and adjunct faculty who are teaching in baccalaureate degree programs shall have the doctorate or an equivalent qualification in the field in which they are appointed.

*The NJCTL does not offer baccalaureate degrees.*

(d) Full-time and part-time faculty teaching in graduate programs shall have earned the doctorate or an equivalent qualification in the field in which they are appointed. They shall engage in an active pattern of professional productivity including, but not limited to, instruction, advisement, research, peer-reviewed publication, authorship, editorial services, creative work, artistic production, patents, applied research, service to professional associations and organizations, program design, and/or the scholarship of instruction.

*Less than 30% of faculty members have terminal degrees, yet faculty members do possess expertise relevant to the instructional design of the Center. NJCTL offers specialized programs focused on the content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge needed to teach secondary sciences and math. All faculty members have experience in P-12 classrooms, teaching sciences and math. Some faculty members have applied experience with careers as scientists, engineers, and other STEM-related professionals.*

*Interviews with currently enrolled students on July 26, 2019 suggest students value the practitioner wisdom the faculty provides. In response to a request for additional information, NJCTL reported “ the majority of students reported that the instructor was knowledgeable about course content (physics - 98%), (chemistry - 87%), (mathematics - 95%)” <supplemental communication, p. 4).*

*Areas of concern:*

- *TERMINAL DEGREES: Most faculty do not possess terminal degrees, which provide training and experience in foundational ideas and methods used in the various disciplines and other content areas taught by faculty to understand and produce new knowledge. The Center is encouraged to reflect on its approach to faculty recruitment and/or encourage and support faculty members to pursue terminal degrees along with other innovative approaches to combining researcher and practitioner expertise.*

*Areas of productive push*

- *DOCUMENTATION: Encourage faculty members to list the complete titles of presentations to better demonstrate the expertise of faculty members, especially among those members who lack terminal degrees.*

*All faculty members appear to be involved in some form of professional productivity, with the most active forms being instruction, advisement, program design, and the scholarship of instruction. Additional discussion is provided below.*



*Several faculty members regularly present at local conferences. Some faculty members actively publish in non-academic venues (e.g., trade magazines and blogs). A few have published dissertations and journal articles.*

*Most of the faculty are actively engaged in the design of NJCTL programs. Based on interviews, all faculty seem to advise.*

*Areas of productive push:*

- *SCHOLARSHIP of PEDAGOGY: Given the faculty's commitment to closing the gap in teacher education related to content knowledge and pedagogy, the leadership and faculty are encouraged to engage in more rigorous study of the design, implementation, and impact of its approach. Center leadership can encourage such scholarship and find ways to support faculty (e.g., instructional release time or assistance securing funding).*

(e) Adjunct faculty shall possess the same qualifications as full-time and part-time faculty. Adjunct faculty shall be academically qualified to teach all courses to which they are assigned. When appropriate in the judgment of the institution, compensating preparation or experience may be taken into account in judging whether an adjunct instructor is academically qualified to teach a particular course.

*NJCTL does not employ adjunct faculty members <p. 49>.*

(f) Regardless of the specific nature of an academic appointment, be it initial, multi-year, temporary, or permanent, the principle of academic freedom shall apply to all faculty, including adjunct faculty, for it is only through academic freedom that ideas and data can be explored without prejudice. An institution shall promulgate a statement concerning the academic freedom of faculty members that should include a statement supporting the following principles:

*From page 361 of the petition and included in the Employee/Faculty Policy Manual, NJCTL's statement on academic freedom reads:*

- *"NJCTL's policy on academic freedom takes into account our standard objectives for each course as well as the instructor's expertise. While NJCTL course content is clearly articulated for faculty and students, course instructors are encouraged to use their deep knowledge and expertise in responding to student questions about course content. In addition, faculty are urged to take an active role in the weekly meetings and determine the development and improvement of all our courses."*
- *(Same page) "NJCTL believes that academic freedom shall apply to all faculty and support the following principles:*

- a. *Freedom in research and publication where these activities do not interfere with adequate performance of academic duties;*
- b. *Freedom to discuss controversial issues pertinent to the discipline; and*
- c. *Retention of all rights as a citizen to free speech and publication. Such rights are not, as such, subject to institutional censorship or discipline.”*

1. Freedom in research and publication where these activities do not interfere with adequate performance of academic duties;

*Since many faculty members elect to conduct scholarship related to developing and using PSI or PMI, research and publication complements the execution and performance of academic duties.*

2. Freedom in the classroom to discuss controversial issues pertinent to the discipline; and

*There is an explicit reference to academic freedom in the classroom. During the site visit, there was no evidence to suggest the faculty felt guarded in expressing their views or ideas.*

3. Retention of all rights as a citizen to free speech and publication. Such rights are not, as such, subject to institutional censorship or discipline.

*No evidence to the contrary found.*

*The institution **meets** the requirements of this rule.*

### **9A:1-1.9 Library**

(a) Qualified library professionals, librarians, and support personnel in numbers sufficient to serve the needs of students and faculty shall staff the institution's library. Every institution, regardless of enrollment or number of academic offerings, shall provide access to at least one qualified library professional with the exception of institutions with a specialty mission. Institutions with a specialty mission shall provide access to a qualified library professional, a librarian, or an individual qualified by way of disciplinary expertise (for example, an earned doctorate, extensive study in the discipline, demonstrated scholarly production, etc.).

*The institution has a qualified librarian who will serve in a part-time capacity. The librarian has been recognized by national library and information associations and has work experience serving institutions with specialty missions and providing online education. The librarian has conference presentations, some classroom teaching experience, and minored in math.*

*Since the librarian is not full time, the Center plans to engage the services of a network of librarians to provide support.*

(b) An institution shall demonstrate the development and maintenance of a collection that reflects and supports the curriculum.

*In its petition, NJCTL reported that it has an electronic library collection, writing “The core of NJCTL’s collection comprises over 225,000 presentation slides and 12,000 documents created by NJCTL to support K-12 mathematics and science instruction, including pacing guides, homework/classroom worksheets, classroom assessments, labs, and equation sheets... Research articles, an extensive collection of video resources created by NJCTL and links to many online resources relevant to STEM teachers” are also available (p. 371). The electronic library collection is available to students and faculty.*

*The Center presented a plan to expand its library, including granting students access, if approved as an IHE in New Jersey.*

*Of particular strength:*

- *PLANNING for LIBRARY SERVICES: The Center has demonstrated its commitment to following through on strategic plans with its completion of the Phase II of its 3-phased plan for expanding its library.*

(c) There shall be a program for continuous acquisition of materials including books, journals, databases, and other instructional materials.

*In its petition, the Center reports a plan for the expansion of the library. The plan was submitted as supplemental material during the site visit. Following Phase III of its 3-phased plan for expansion, the Center plans to create a new strategic plan for the library.*

*Of particular strength:*

- *FACULTY ENGAGEMENT: The supplemental library expansion plan and interview with Center staff demonstrate the close involvement of faculty in the creation of the library catalog.*
- *INFORMATION LITERACY: The supplemental library expansion plan includes actions to integrate information literacy into coursework as opposed to a standalone course or set of resource materials.*

(d) An institution shall catalog and maintain all library holdings appropriately, including providing a protective environment for its physical library material that adequately protects the collection from deterioration and damage.

*The Center offers mostly online learning; as such, its library is online. The library plans to join consortia that support inter-library loans. The Center's plan for expansion includes actions to create access to the library collection and services that is secure and stable.*

(e) An institution shall provide clear and consistent access to electronic resources.

*Faculty and students currently have access to the library. During the site visit and in the supplemental library expansion plan, the Center demonstrated its commitment to providing consistent access to electronic resources with plans to research vendors and ongoing assessment. As the Center expands its library collection, the new resources will be available to both faculty and students.*

(f) An institution shall document the existence of a plan to assess and document effective use of library resources by students and faculty.

*The plan was not submitted in the report but as a supplemental document during the site visit and includes its approach for assessing and documents the use of its content by students and faculty members <pp. 2-4>.*

*Areas of productive push*

- *RESOURCES and GOALS: Name actions in the strategic plan in relation to the resources needed to execute those actions and the goal of these actions; Incorporate the budget into the budget into the plan.*

(g) An institution should utilize library representatives in the curriculum development process to inform the administration of the library's ability to offer adequate support for materials and library education.

*During the site visit, the Center staff and librarian described the involvement of faculty and the librarian in the co-design of the library and instructional materials. The supplemental library expansion plan also illustrates the process by which the librarian and faculty plan to incorporate informational literacy into coursework <pp. 1-4>.*

(h) An institution may enter into a contract with another library or libraries for the provision of collections and services, physical or virtual. Institutions shall demonstrate that the collections are appropriate for the curriculum of the institution, that students have convenient access to contracted library services, that there is adequate library instruction provided to students to use effectively the services of the contracted library, and that there are qualified library professionals or librarians available to assist students. The institution shall retain full responsibility for adequacy of resources available to students. Institutions are encouraged to participate in appropriate consortia that allow them to expand and more effectively deliver information resources and services.

*It seems as if half of the library services will be contracted. The supplemental library expansion plan includes actions to research and assess vendors.*

(i) An institution shall have in place a plan that articulates how students will obtain information literacy skills as they progress through the curriculum. The plan shall identify outcomes for information literacy skill development, and how those outcomes are measured and assessed.

*From page 8 of the petition: “NJCTL students are called upon to demonstrate knowledge and skills related to the Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education as developed by the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL). Various courses integrate the six (6) concepts that anchor the framework, and the groundwork to enable students to meet these outcomes are conveyed during the foundational PSI and PMI Teaching Methods courses for each content area (physics, chemistry, or mathematics). More specifically, NJCTL students are guided through a variety of activities and called upon to submit multiple artifacts related to information literacy in their own teaching content area through the Teaching Methods course, and supported to master these skills such that students may replicate outcomes in subsequent content courses and field work.”*

*The supplemental plan for library expansion also includes actions related to collaboration with the faculty to integrate information literacy into the coursework (p. 1-2).*

*The institution **meets** the requirements of this rule.*

### **9A:1-1.10 Students and student services**

(a) An institution shall have a clearly defined admissions policy appropriate to its mission and shall admit students whose educational interests and abilities qualify them to pursue a program offered by the institution.

*NJCTL currently serves licensed teachers interested in deepening their knowledge and teaching skills in the sciences, maths, and related fields. The admissions criteria reflects this focus and interviews with students during the site visit confirm.*

*Areas of productive push:*

- *ASSESSMENT of APPLICANTS: Develop admissions criteria related to students' abilities. Consider, for example, using students' performances on GRE or SAT.*

(b) An institution shall provide adequate student support, financial aid services, and facilities to help students succeed and shall maintain accurate records of each student's academic progress.

*The Center offers a set of student support strategies that begin with registration and persist throughout students' experiences with NJCTL. The strategies help to welcome students, provide in-person coaching opportunities, and practices and policies to help students who are struggling academically persist in the classroom and in their program.*

*Discussions during the site visit revealed that the Center maintains operations that result in low-cost tuition to the student (\$275 per credit with no course fees). The Center also works to make lab resources affordable to its students. In 2019, the Center allocated \$50K to student support services for approximately 125 students enrolled in a program (i.e., not the students enrolled in a single module).*

*Based on the interviews during the site visit, student support services begins at enrollment. The dean of students welcomes students and orients them to the program.*

*Once enrolled, the Center uses its online platform to provide student supports. The platform allows students to pose concerns and faculty members reported during the site visit that they use the platform to help monitor student engagement. Changes in engagement (e.g., incomplete modules or missed assignments) prompt the faculty to act. The dean of students also monitors progress.*

*According to the petition, "Academic intervention occurs on an ongoing basis as the dean of students monitors the daily progress of students reports this progress to faculty on a weekly basis, and sends emails to students to determine if additional help is needed" (p. 45).*

*The Center also supports diverse learners. When prompted to describe its approach to serving diverse learners the faculty reported that it offers foundational modules, transcripts of online*

*instruction and provides additional time to complete assignments, along with other accommodations.*

*Other areas of student support are absent because "All NJCTL students are enrolled on a part-time basis and NJCTL has no physical facilities or campus." As such, NJCTL does not provide counseling, health facilities, or similar services (p. 61).*

*Of particular strength:*

- *The interviews with faculty and students as well as student survey data reported in the petition demonstrates the faculty's deep commitment to student support.*

*Areas of productive pushes:*

- *DIVERSE LEARNERS: Add services for diverse learners to the student handbook and describe procedures for accessing those resources.*
- *STUDENT SUPPORT: Given the faculty's commitment, the Center is strongly encouraged to develop procedures for responding to issues of physical or mental health.*

(c) An institution shall maintain transcripts for all students and shall provide to all students who request them, transcripts showing dates of attendance and academic performance.

*The petition reads, "Student records are maintained by NJCTL in secure electronic storage. Transcripts are provided to students upon graduation. Additional transcripts may be obtained upon request" (p. 62).*

*A sample transcript is provided on page 405 of the petition that reports dates of attendance, coursework, performance, and degree/endorsements conferred. There is a reference that students have requested transcripts.*

*The institution **meets** the requirements of this rule.*

### **9A:1-1.11 Physical facilities**

(a) Physical facilities shall be adequate for an institution to fulfill its mission. The institution's facilities provide the context in which teaching and learning take place; it is, therefore, critical that this setting be maximally conducive to fostering productive scholarship. Such facilities generally include, but are not limited to, instructional buildings, laboratories, residence halls, student activity centers, recreational/athletic centers, administrative offices, library/learning resource centers, computing centers, and support service centers.

*In the petition, the Center reports, “NJCTL operates as a virtual institution with no physical facilities. NJCTL staff work from their homes and NJCTL courses are taught in the schools from which the students enrolled in these programs (i.e., their place of employment). Therefore, no resources need to be allocated to expanding or maintaining a physical site for this proposed programming” (p. 238). Additionally, the library is online.*

*As such, there is no need for residence halls, recreational/athletic centers, and administrative offices.*

*Interviews with students during the site visit revealed that for some of the science programs, students meet in-person for labs.*

*Of particular strength:*

- *RESPONSIVENESS to ADULT LEARNERS: The interviews with students revealed a deep appreciation for the online nature of the program. Students named work, family, and travel demands as barriers to graduate study. All the students interviewed have also attended other IHEs.*

*Areas of productive push:*

- *IN-PERSON LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES: Offer or facilitate in-person labs for students in the math program. This in-person touch point was not only of interest to the math students interviewed during the site visit, but can create a space to provide support with classroom technologies and to practice teaching.*

(b) The institution shall ensure that the physical facilities are safely maintained and are sufficient in quality, size, and number to accommodate students, faculty, and staff; it shall provide adequately equipped laboratories as required for effective instruction and learning.

*The Center does not maintain physical facilities*

*The institution **meets** the requirements of this rule.*

### **9A:1-1.12 Official publications**

- (a) All information released by an institution shall be true and accurate.

*Reviewer did not find inaccurate or false information.*

*Areas of productive push:*

- *CLARITY: There is an opportunity to clearly define terms (e.g., teacher versus student) and consistently use those terms.*



(b) An institution's official catalog sets forth the responsibilities of both the student and the institution. As the nature of these responsibilities is subject to frequent change, official catalogs shall be printed or electronically updated at intervals sufficient to ensure currency of information and in quantities sufficient to supply interested persons.

*The course catalog is available online. Based on interviews during the site visit, course materials are updated at least annually.*

(c) An institution shall either include the following information in its official catalogs or provide a current web address in its official catalogs for where the information is located on the institution's website:

1. A statement of institutional mission;

*Information is stated in the course catalogue and student handbook <p. 383>.*

2. Statements of institutional and programmatic accreditation;

*Information is stated in the student handbook and program guide <p. 389>.*

3. Lists of faculty and administrative officers, including their earned degrees;

*Information is stated in the student handbook and program guide <p. 387-388>, however, they do not list degrees earned for most faculty members.*

4. Complete curricular information, including course descriptions and the grading system;

*The online platform lists modules and includes course descriptions and assessment. The grading system is also reported in the student handbook along with definitions for satisfactory academic progress.*

5. Requirements for admission, transfer, and graduation;

*The student handbook and program guide contain a discussion of:*

- *Admission: Student handbook <p. 394>*
- *Transfer: Student handbook <p. 395>*
- *Graduation: Student handbook <pp. 389-392, 401>*

6. Policies for awarding degree credit and policies on academic progress, academic standing, and withdrawal;

*The student handbook and program guide contain a discussion of:*

- *Degree and credit <p. 400-401; Current policies with CSU Global <beginning on p. 418>*
- *Academic standing: Student handbook <p. 393>*
- *Withdrawal: Student handbook <p. 402>*

7. Descriptions of facilities and of available student support services;

*As stated in the petition, “As an online institution, NJCTL has no buildings or facilities. However, a variety of student supports are available and described throughout this Handbook, including support for students with disabilities, protection from discrimination, etc. Students with any concerns or needs should reach out to their instructor or the dean of students for assistance” (p. 398).*

8. Student costs, including an itemized listing of all mandatory fees charged to students, as well as refund and financial aid policies;

*The student handbook and program guide contain a discussion of :*

- *Fees, aid, and costs: Student handbook <p. 395>*
- *Refund: Student handbook <p. 402>*

9. An academic calendar;

*Information stated in student handbook <p. 389-392>. Note: there is no published calendar. Modules do have pacing guides and coursework should be completed so that students can complete the Praxis exam.*

10. A list of members of the governing board; and

*The student handbook and program guide contain a discussion of governing board members <p. 386>*

11. A description of rules and regulations regarding students if not described in other publications available to students.

*The student handbook and program guide contain a discussion of:*

- *Academic integrity <pp. 392-393>; The policy is also replicated in course materials (i.e., syllabi)*
- *How to take tests <p. 393>*

- *Academic standing <p. 393>*
- *ADA compliance <p. 395>*
- *Discrimination <p. 395-396>*

*Areas of productive pushes:*

- *VISION: Add the vision statement to the student handbook and program guide*
- *TRANSITION: Develop policies that describe the NJCTL's approach to credits and degree granting separate from those for CSU Global*
- *CERTIFICATION DATES: Add link to certification requirements (e.g., the Praxis exam) and deadlines to the student handbook and program guide*

*The institution **meets** the requirements of this rule.*

## **SUBCHAPTER 2. DEGREE STANDARDS AND PROGRAMMATIC MISSION**

### **9A:1-2.1 General program standards**

(a) An institution's overall curriculum shall reflect and support the mission of the institution.

*The institution's curriculum reflects and supports the mission of the institution. Specifically, program offerings and curriculum reflect the institution's focus on preparing STEM teachers. Additionally, the curriculum is focused primarily on STEM content and STEM content-based pedagogy, rather than more generalized pedagogies.*

(b) The academic year shall be determined by the institution's governing board.

*Students are admitted on a rolling basis and coursework is based on concept mastery, not seat-time. Consequently, there is not a typical "academic year." <pg. 394>. That said, 94% of students complete the program within two years <pg. 60>.*

(c) A semester credit hour shall not be counted on an hour-for-hour basis for library, independent-study, laboratory, or physical education activities. A semester credit hour is not required to be counted on an hour-for-hour basis for distance learning or blended (or hybrid) learning.

*Credit hours appear to be calculated using the standard rate of 1 credit hour = 15 hours of instructional time <pp. 9-11>.*

(d) Credit courses offered by a college in conjunction with or under contract with a noncollegiate organization shall meet the same requirements the college applies to its own courses with respect to quality, course content, class attendance and participation, student evaluation, etc. The standards presented at N.J.A.C. 9A:1-6.3, dealing with off-campus sites at which credit courses are offered by a college in conjunction with or under contract with a noncollegiate organization, shall apply to such courses offered at the principal campus.

*This rule is not applicable in this case.*

(e) The rigor of all credit-bearing courses shall be substantially the same, regardless of the type of educational delivery mode ("distance learning," "blended (or hybrid) learning," or "traditional face-to-face learning"), as demonstrated by the institution through various forms of evidence. Such evidence shall include, but not be limited to, at least two of the following: syllabi, documented faculty interaction with students, learning outcomes, documented units of curricular material, and other documentation which objectively demonstrates the amount of time and/or the level of rigor necessary to complete the coursework.

*The rigor of all credit-bearing courses appears to be substantially similar. Given that all courses are delivered online there is no concern of rigor varying by educational delivery mode.*

*For the proposed degree programs, NJCTL meets the requirements of the above standards.*

*This conclusion is based on the submitted petition and additional, updated syllabi that were submitted on the reviewers' request. Upon submission, NJCTL leadership wrote, "We realized that we included shortened versions of our courses as syllabi in the petition. We have course design documents (CDDs) created for CSU-Global that have far more detail about each course."*

*Of particular strength:*

- *DEPTH OVER BREADTH: The institution has done an admirable job of narrowing the set of topics, especially in general, secondary pedagogy. Instead of covering a laundry list of strategies and structure and philosophies in a somewhat perfunctory way, NJCTL has opted to focus on a set of seven core ideas. We encourage the institution to continually examine whether these are the BEST seven topics, but we applaud the approach of depth over breadth.*
- *CONTENT PEDAGOGIES GROUNDED IN K-12 CURRICULUM: By grounding content pedagogy in a prescribed K-12 curriculum, educators are learning and practicing with the exact same materials that they will be teaching their K-12 students. While potentially limiting those who can participate in the program (e.g., those students who are required to teach a K-12 curriculum other than PSI or PMI) we believe the advantages of grounding content-rich instruction in a K-12 curriculum far outweigh the alternative--teaching content in a curriculum agnostic way.*

*Areas of productive push:*

- *SECONDARY TEACHING METHODS: Conversations at the site visit confirmed that there is no substantive differences in the following courses: Teaching Methods for Mathematics, Teaching Methods for Physics, and Teacher Methods for Chemistry. This is not necessarily problematic, in theory, but suggests a level of specialization and focus that does not bear out in practice. Our recommendation is to offer a single course (maybe with subject-specific sections) called Secondary Teaching Methods.*
- *FLEXIBILITY IN REQUIRED CONTENT OF FIELD EXPERIENCE COURSES: As currently listed, teachers are required to teach from a relatively narrow set of content topics (especially in mathematics). While this may work for current students, the requirements would prove problematic for teachers of more advanced mathematics courses (e.g., trigonometry or calculus). Our recommendation is to allow for more choices in what topics can be taught during field experiences.*
- *INTENDED REDUNDANCY IN FIELD EXPERIENCE ASSESSMENTS: As currently articulated, the assignments are exactly the same between Field Experience I and II. Based on conversations with faculty during the site visit, this redundancy is intentional. In the*

*spirit of depth over breadth, this is not necessarily a bad thing, however, we recommend that the program be more explicit around these redundancies (e.g., articulate their strategy in syllabi) and take proactive measures to ensure that candidates are submitting new work for the second set of assignments (e.g., keeping the same assessor between I and II; focusing on growth from the original set of submissions.)*

*The institution **meets** the requirements of this rule.*

**9A:1-2.5; 9A:1-2.6 –Graduate education; Master’s degree programs**

*The institution **meets** the requirements of these rules.*